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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 006303

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: FRENCH AGREE ON NEED TO CONTINUE HAITIAN ELECTION
MOMENTUM

REF: STATE 165009

Classified By: Political Minister-Counselor Josiah Rosenblatt, reasons
1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) Poloff delivered reftel demarche to the new team of MFA officials responsible for Haiti issues: Pierre-Alain Coffinier, DAS-equivalent for Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean; Cecile Merle, Haiti desk officer; and Benoit Guidee, UN desk officer covering Haiti. Coffinier underlined that the GOF shared our assessment of the situation in Haiti. The three MFA officials noted that the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) had finally put forth an electoral calendar -- thanks primarily to MINUSTAH pressure. They agreed with our position that the UN needed to exert greater influence in the administration of the elections, while at the same time keeping a "low profile" publicly to avoid local backlash. Coffinier confirmed GOF participation in the Friends of Haiti and ministerial meetings taking place in New York this week. Guidee added that the UN Core Group also shared the U.S./French analysis of the situation, but that the group's cohesiveness seemed to function better in Port-au-Prince than in New York.

2. (SBU) Coffinier also gave us a brief readout on the weekend trip to Haiti by Brigitte Girardin, Minister of Cooperation, Development, and French-speaking Communities. While there, Girardin signed agreements with the IGOH for grants of \$1.83 million USD (1.5 million euros) for HIV/AIDS and \$1.22 million USD (1 million euros) for education, in addition to the nearly \$44 million USD (36 million euros) in annual aid from France. Girardin also announced that the EU would unblock more than \$87 million USD (72 million euros) in aid for Haiti.

3. (SBU) Additionally, Coffinier indicated that interim Prime Minister Latortue would travel to France October 20 and be received by French Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin.
STAPLETON